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Letter dated 26 April 2004 addressed to the President of the Security Council by the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations

Please find attached the report on the work of the Security Council during the French Presidency in March 2004 (see annex). This report was written under my supervision, after consultation with the other members of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this letter and its annex as a Security Council document.

(*Signed*) Jean-Marc **de La Sablière**

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Annex to the letter dated 26 April 2004 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: English and French]

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the Presidency of France (March 2004)

Introduction

In March 2004, under the presidency of Jean-Marc de La Sablière, Permanent Representative of France, the Security Council considered many items on its agenda (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Counter-Terrorism Committee, Iraq, Haiti, Middle East, Afghanistan). It gave great emphasis to African issues (Ethiopia and Eritrea, Liberia, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire), in particular during the public meeting held on 25 March, under the presidency of the French Minister for Cooperation and Francophonie, on cross-border issues in West Africa.

Many crises and outbursts of violence led the Council to convene urgently on questions of terrorism (Madrid attacks of 11 March), Palestine and Kosovo.

In March, the Security Council held 20 public meetings and 15 closed consultations. It adopted eight resolutions (1530 (2004) to 1537 (2004)) and four presidential statements. The President also made seven statements to the press in the name of the Council members. The Council also held two private meetings with troop-contributing countries.

The French presidency published daily on its web site (www.un.int/france) the programme of work of the Council and summaries of its activities.

Africa

Burundi

The members of the Council heard, on 22 March, a briefing by Behrooz Sadry, head of the United Nations assessment mission recently sent by the Secretary-General to Burundi. Mr. Sadry told the members of the Council about recent developments in the political process and the implementation of the Arusha Agreement peace process. He gave details of the conclusions of the multidisciplinary mission, which met with all political parties, representatives of civil society, United Nations organizations, and non-governmental organizations. The FNL led by Agathon Rwasa was present in small numbers in rural Bujumbura and was continuing to fight.

Whereas the African Union and the African Mission in Burundi had played a major role in bringing back peace, the contingents now suffered from a lack of financial and logistic capacities. The elections were to be held in less than eight months, within the time limits provided for by the Arusha Agreement.

The Secretariat was therefore recommending the deployment of a multidimensional peacekeeping operation to assist in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the organization of the election process.

The members of the Council took note of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General and most of them supported the idea of a peacekeeping operation as soon as possible in Burundi.

They agreed on a statement to the press on this matter (see appendix).

Côte d'Ivoire

The representative of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat presented, on 26 March, a short update on the demonstration held in Abidjan on 25 March, during which at least 27 people died. The Forces nouvelles had announced they would stop all cooperation with FANCI.

Following the Secretary-General's statement, the members of the Council agreed to issue a statement to the press on the matter (see appendix).

During the consultations held on 31 March, the Under-Secretary-General, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, briefed the Council on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. After the events of 25 and 26 March, the Government had decided to establish a national commission of inquiry. There was a need for a broader inquiry that could take the form of an international commission set up under the auspices of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Albert Tévoédjrè, had travelled to Accra on 29 March and met with President Kufuor to study various options to encourage a political initiative.

The Under-Secretary-General stressed that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was ready to proceed with the plans decided by the Security Council for the deployment of UNOCI.

Ethiopia and Eritrea

After a private meeting on 10 March with the troop-contributing countries to UNMEE, members of the Council heard a briefing on 11 March from Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, on the situation in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The Special Representative stressed that, while the situation in the Temporary Security Zone remained stable, it was nevertheless still fragile and an escalation of tension might lead to a resumption of hostilities.

The main reason for the present stalemate was the lack of progress in the implementation of the Boundary Commission's decision, owing to Ethiopia's rejection of significant parts of that decision. On the Eritrean side, UNMEE faced increased restrictions on its freedom of movement in the areas adjacent to the Temporary Security Zone. The only progress was the first sector meetings of the Military Coordination Commission.

The Special Representative considered that it was important to remind the parties that UNMEE was never meant to support a status quo indefinitely. The mission of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General aimed at encouraging the

dialogue between the two parties and should be backed by the international community.

The members of the Council supported the action of UNMEE and expressed their support to Lloyd Axworthy, Special Envoy, in exercising his mission of good offices, in order to facilitate the implementation of the Algiers Agreement and the Boundary Commission's decision.

They agreed on a draft resolution, which sent a strong message to the parties and extended the mandate of UNMEE until 15 September 2004, and was adopted as Security Council resolution 1531 (2004) on 12 March.

Liberia

On 12 March, the Security Council adopted resolution 1532 (2004), freezing the financial assets of former President Taylor and his close associates.

The members of the Council heard, on 29 March, a presentation of the latest report of the Secretary-General by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

The Under-Secretary-General emphasized that considerable progress had been achieved with the deployment of contingents from many countries. The troop strength of UNMIL now stood at 14,000 and full deployment would be achieved in April.

The ceasefire in Monrovia was respected, despite harassment of civilians and looting by LURD elements.

The resumption of the programme of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation, as well as the engagement of the armed groups in the political process, required careful management. Adequate security should be established for disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation to start. A total of US$ 11 million had been pledged to the trust fund established under UNDP auspices.

In the security sector, the UNMIL civilian police component comprised 518 personnel and would reach a total of 1,115 in June 2004; 300 Liberian police officers had already been trained. The restructuring of the armed forces should also start and the United States would soon send an assessment mission.

On the humanitarian side, access was better, but the agencies were expecting more opening in certain areas, for the 250,000 displaced persons and 25,000 refugees returning from Sierra Leone.

The members of the Council welcomed the significant progress made towards improving security in Liberia. Still, much remained to be done, especially with regard to disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation, which was one of the biggest challenges ahead. They stressed the need for donors to assume their responsibilities and for regional cooperation among the United Nations missions in West Africa. They also noted that the increased stability in the country should encourage the Government to extend State authority throughout Liberia.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 2 March, under "Other matters" the members of the Council heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General on recent developments in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

He reported on the violence perpetrated in the Ituri district by the armed groups. An attack had been launched on 12 February against a MONUC convoy in Katoto during which a military observer from Kenya was killed. The recent attacks by the militias, which were now split into two factions of UPC, on the camp of internally displaced persons had caused some 500 people to flee to other areas of the town. He also indicated that an alliance of a Lendu militia and UPC appeared to be behind a massacre in January in Gobu, which resulted in more than 200 missing people.

As a result of those attacks and the deterioration of the general security situation in the region, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, William Lacy Swing, and the Force Commander had travelled to Bunia on 21 and 22 February for urgent consultations with the MONUC Ituri brigade as well as the civilian component in Ituri. The discussion had resulted in a unified sense of urgency to address the situation in Ituri through a reinforced political and military approach. A "zero tolerance" policy would be established and the Ituri brigade had been directed to disarm, by force if necessary, all militias encountered outside officially recognized camps. MONUC would adopt a robust posture from now on, as it had done on 29 February, when a militiaman had to be killed.

The Under-Secretary-General also reported on the security situation in Katanga following a massacre and widespread atrocities in the north of the province during clashes between two rival Mayi-Mayi factions. He also mentioned the situation in Bukavu, where an arms cache had been discovered. Extremist propaganda against MONUC was calling on the population to attack its personnel, which was extremely disquieting.

The members of the Council reacted to this briefing in a statement to the press (see appendix), in which they condemned the violence, encouraged the Congolese transitional authorities to exercise fully their responsibilities in the eastern part of the country and urged all States in the region to play a constructive role.

On 12 March, the Security Council adopted resolution 1533 (2004), establishing a committee of the Security Council and a group of experts on the implementation of the arms embargo imposed by paragraph 20 of resolution 1493 (2003) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The members of the Security Council heard, on 31 March, a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General, who presented the fifteenth progress report on the implementation of resolution 1417 (2002) and provided further details on recent developments in the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular the events of 28 March in Kinshasa.

The Under-Secretary-General indicated that, since the report's publication, progress had been made on several aspects:

- The transition process: extension of State authority (distribution of gubernatorial and vice-gubernatorial posts), implementation of the legislative agenda.

- Security sector reform (training of two battalions by Belgium, appointment of the coordinator and deputy coordinator of the programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration).
- Security situation: the Council of Ministers decided on 30 March to establish an inter-ministerial commission of inquiry into the shooting incidents in Kinshasa on 28 March.
- MONUC carried out a series of actions in order to enforce the "Ituri without weapons" and the "Bukavu weapon-free zone" policies.
- The programme of disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement or reintegration benefited 10,420 combatants as of 29 March.
- Regional relations: the second meeting of the joint Democratic Republic of the Congo-Uganda bilateral security commission could be held, facilitated by MONUC.

Despite noticeable progress, the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains fragile, notably because of the tensions dividing the Transitional Government. The Under-Secretary-General stressed that the next few months would be critical for the transitional process.

The members of the Council expressed their concern regarding the stagnation of the peace process and the deterioration in the humanitarian situation, and strongly condemned the recent attacks against the personnel of MONUC. They called for the acceleration of the implementation of the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement, the carrying out of security sector reform, the normalization of relations between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and neighbouring countries, the quick launching of the programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and the continuing support of the international community. They appealed for the convening this year of an international conference on the Great Lakes.

A statement to the press was adopted at the end of the meeting (see appendix).

Sierra Leone

The members of the Council heard, on 26 March, a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone, Daudi N. Mwakawago, who reported that the peace process was being consolidated and significant progress was being made in many fields. However, the challenges were enormous. Sierra Leone was a very poor country with tremendous potential (especially in mining, agriculture, fisheries and tourism).

The process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration had been completed (dealing with over 70,000 ex-combatants) but there were still concerns relating to the economy's capacity to generate sufficient employment for ex-combatants and unemployed youths. Sierra Leone had successfully reintegrated all internally displaced persons. Voter registration for the local government elections was concluded on 28 February, with the logistical support of UNAMSIL.

The Government had taken important measures to assert its control over the diamond industry, but illicit mining was still a major problem.

In view of the challenges still facing Sierra Leone, the key security benchmarks would not be fully met at the expiration of the mandate of UNAMSIL

in December 2004. The major concern centred on the inability of the Sierra Leone police to attain its full strength until mid-2005 and the weak capacity of the armed forces, in view of the country's fragile security situation and stability.

Thus, the Secretariat was urging the Council to consider the recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General concerning the retention of a United Nations peacekeeping presence in Sierra Leone for a period of one year, to enable the Government to prepare to assume its security responsibilities in due course.

The members of the Council generally supported the approach put forward by the Secretariat and decided, in resolution 1537 (2004), adopted on 30 March, to renew the mandate of UNAMSIL for six months and to maintain a United Nations peacekeeping presence in Sierra Leone into 2005.

West Africa (cross-border issues)

The Security Council held a public meeting on 25 March on cross-border issues in West Africa, under the presidency of the French Minister for Cooperation and Francophonie, Pierre-André Wiltzer, in the presence of the Secretary-General and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana, Nana Akufo-Addo. The Council heard statements by the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Mohamed Ibn Chambas; the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Jan Egeland; and the Associate Administrator of UNDP, Zéphirin Diabré. Besides members of the Council, the representatives of Ireland, on behalf of the European Union countries, and Japan made statements, as donor countries.

The members of the Council supported the Secretary-General's recommendations, in particular with regard to the issues identified, the strengthening of coordination among United Nations missions in the region, the call for close coordination of United Nations action with regional organizations, and the attention that should be brought to the implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. They recognized the importance of development aspects in the prevention and settlement of conflicts, as most countries belonged to the group of the least developed countries.

A presidential statement (S/PRST/2004/7) was read out at the end of the meeting, which outlined several practical orientations on the coordination of United Nations interventions and the role of local and international actors in the West Africa region. It established a set of actions to be taken by the United Nations system (coordination of the activities of the peacekeeping operations in the region, sharing of resources, better coordination with ECOWAS, harmonizing of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, possibility of cross-border military operations), ECOWAS (implementation of the 1998 moratorium on light weapons, establishment of a regional register of small arms and light weapons) and other partners (call for the support of donor countries).

Asia

Afghanistan

On 24 March, the members of the Security Council first heard a public briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hédi Annabi, on

recent developments in Afghanistan and the report of the Secretary-General recommending the renewal of the mandate of UNAMA for 12 months.

The Assistant Secretary-General gave details on the ratification of the constitution that helped clarify the types of elections that would eventually be held, if possible simultaneously. A decision should be made in the very near future on the timing of the elections.

The first phase of the voter registration project had been completed on target (1.56 million voters out of 1.9 million eligible in the eight main cities).

Security remained of the essence to ensure the success of the process. The Secretariat welcomed the deployment of additional provincial reconstruction teams, but the fierce fighting which had occurred in Herat on 21 March was evidence that the situation was not stabilized yet. More police officers had to be trained (4,339 at present).

The country's economy was still complicated by illegal drug production, which was being fought but remained a major challenge.

During closed consultations, the members of the Council shared the preoccupations set out in the Secretary-General's report and hoped that the upcoming Berlin conference would be an opportunity to examine in depth the difficulties Afghanistan had to face. They agreed on the renewal of the mandate of UNAMA by resolution 1536 (2004), which was adopted on 26 March.

Iraq

On 2 March, the members of the Council agreed to condemn in the strongest possible terms the terrorist attacks in Iraq (Baghdad and Kerbala) in a statement to the press (see appendix).

During the formal meeting held on 24 March, the President of the Council was authorized to make a presidential statement (S/PRST/2004/6) supporting the Secretary-General's decision to dispatch to Iraq his Special Adviser and his team, in order to lend assistance to the Iraqi people in the formation of an interim government to which sovereignty would be transferred on 30 June 2004 and in the preparations for direct elections to be held before the end of January 2005.

United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission

The members of the Council heard, on 5 March, a briefing by the Acting Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC, Demetrius Perricos, who introduced the sixteenth quarterly report on the activities of the Commission, following the meeting of the College of Commissioners on 24 February.

The Acting Executive Chairman mentioned the main conclusions contained in the three appendices, which showed that no weapons were presented by Iraq or found by the United Nations inspectors and destroyed after 1994, except for remnants recovered from the unilateral destruction by Iraq and what was destroyed by UNMOVIC early in 2003. Pending a Security Council decision on its future mandate, as envisaged in resolution 1483 (2003), UNMOVIC had continued its work, in preparation for resuming its activities in Iraq, or for any other specific activities that the Council might wish it to undertake.

The work had mainly focused on two areas, namely, the preparation of a "compendium" on the nature and extent of Iraq's proscribed weapons of mass destruction and related programmes, and working out modifications to the ongoing monitoring and verification plan.

UNMOVIC was hoping that, when the work was completed, it would provide useful information on the nature and extent of Iraqi weapons programmes and help to resolve any uncertainties that might remain after the disarmament of Iraq was confirmed. The Acting Executive Chairman indicated his intention of setting up an international panel of technical experts to assist in that regard.

UNMOVIC now numbered 24 experts drawn from 14 nationalities. It needed to recruit some staff in selected areas. UNMOVIC stood ready to resume its operations in Iraq when the United Nations returned and also to provide its expertise in any area that the Council might determine. An early discussion of this matter was desirable.

In this respect, some members of the Council stressed that it was still premature to engage in a discussion on the revision of the UNMOVIC mandate.

Others on the contrary thought a discussion on this matter should be held sooner rather than later. Several members hoped that UNMOVIC expertise would be preserved and used in backing international efforts regarding non-proliferation. Other members were of the view that, in the changed circumstances, it would be appropriate to terminate its mandate.

Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 18 March, the members of the Council heard a public briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Danilo Türk, on the situation in the Middle East.

He underlined the increase in violence and suffering: 101 people had lost their lives — 80 Palestinians and 21 Israelis. At the same time, a small window of opportunity for restarting the peace process remained open.

In the aftermath of the recent suicide bombings, the planned meeting between the Israeli and Palestinian Prime Ministers had been called off. He urged the two men to meet and begin to work together to implement the Quartet's road map. Prime Minister Sharon's welcome announced decision to withdraw the Israeli presence from the Gaza Strip could be a positive contribution to the search for peace, if it were carried out as part of the road map, in consultation with the Palestinian Authority, and if the withdrawal were full and final.

The humanitarian situation remained dire and UNRWA might soon be obliged to severely cut back its activities because of a sharp drop in its emergency funding (only $45 million pledged so far of the $193 million requested for 2004).

In south Lebanon, the situation continued to be worrisome because of explosive devices planted by Hezbollah along the Blue Line and Israeli air violations of Lebanese airspace.

Meeting in private consultations, the members of the Council generally shared the views expressed by the Secretariat. Most of them deplored the continuing

violence and recalled the need to achieve a global peace, by resuming political dialogue and implementing the road map.

On 22 March, the members of the Council had an exchange of views following the assassination of the spiritual leader of Hamas, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, and decided to continue their discussions at the expert level.

Following private consultations on the morning of 23 March, they decided to hold an open debate in the afternoon, which was attended by many delegations. The draft resolution subsequently presented by Algeria and Libya could not be adopted, because of the negative vote of a permanent member.

Americas

Haiti

On 5 March, the members of the Council heard an update by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs on the humanitarian situation in Haiti.

He emphasized that the recent events had occurred during what was already a silent humanitarian emergency in Haiti. The population had been living in extremely precarious conditions (42 per cent of the population below the poverty line).

The areas of health services, food security and education were the most affected by the present crisis. A total of 1,400 people had attempted to seek refuge in neighbouring countries. The humanitarian agencies had had no access to their beneficiaries for several weeks. Only 45 humanitarian staff remained in Port-au-Prince. The UNDP Resident Coordinator had been designated as Humanitarian Coordinator for Haiti. WFP had resumed food distribution in the capital city and UNICEF had sent 30 tons of medical and sanitary supplies. ICRC and non-governmental organizations had been active in re-establishing the medical and hospital system. The Coordinator was to open up humanitarian corridors and five regional hubs.

Finally, a Flash Appeal for Haiti would be launched early the following week to the main contributors to meet the most urgent needs. The members of the Council thanked the Under-Secretary-General for this detailed information and agreed on a statement to the press (see appendix).

On 23 March, the members of the Council heard a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs on the situation in Haiti, following the adoption of resolution 1529 (2004).

He stated that the Multinational Interim Force had deployed in the capital and other areas of the country to contribute to a secure and stable environment. The deployment of 2,800 Canadian, Chilean, French and United States troops had allowed for considerable progress in stabilizing a situation characterized by a collapse of public structures, looting, and widespread violence. Calm had been restored in Port-au-Prince and there was still an urgent need for increased security in other localities.

The Secretariat was continuing close consultations with the Multinational Interim Force with the aim of facilitating the transition to a United Nations operation. The Assistant Secretary-General provided information on recent political

developments and the swearing-in of a new interim Cabinet, on the human rights situation, which was still a major concern, and the humanitarian situation, with the opening of a secure corridor from Port-au-Prince to Cap Haïtien and the resumption of activities by the United Nations agencies.

Hocine Medili was conducting a multidisciplinary assessment mission under the auspices of the Secretary-General's Special Adviser, John Reginald Dumas, who would soon report to the Council.

The members of the Council then took note of the presentation given by the United States delegation in the name of the countries participating in the Multinational Interim Force. They welcomed the agreement of CARICOM to participate in a forthcoming United Nations stabilization force and stressed that the international community should be mobilized in order to create the necessary conditions to restore a secure political, social, economic and humanitarian environment in Haiti in the long term.

The members of the Council held consultations on 30 March with the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, who was back in New York, after staying in Haiti, visiting countries of the area and attending the CARICOM Summit in St. Kitts. He said that more information would be provided to the Council when it received the detailed report of the assessment team.

The most important question at present was security. The situation in Port-au-Prince had more or less returned to normal. But outside the capital there were still difficulties, especially in the northern part of the country where armed groups were still active. Since the deployment of the Multinational Interim Force, the security situation was much better overall than a month before.

A democratic process had been followed to choose a Cabinet, consisting of technocrats. The economic situation was of concern, with an alarming absence of government services in many sectors and a public health service in collapse.

The Special Adviser emphasized that the biggest challenge was building institutions in Haiti to replace the ones which had disappeared. He had met with the CARICOM countries and intended to go to Washington to meet with OAS.

The Special Adviser finally stated that, after 10 years of international interventions in Haiti, there was a need to change the way of approaching the problem and to learn from the lessons of the past.

There were real urgencies at the moment in Haiti, from garbage collection to water and electricity, health, education and of course police recruitment (only 2,000 active officers). Later, a truth and reconciliation commission could be established and the electoral process set up.

The members of the Council focused on the question of the disarmament of armed groups, the need for national reconciliation and elections to be organized in a reasonable time. They agreed that the most urgent need was the stabilization of the country and creating the necessary conditions for security.

Europe

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The members of the Council heard, on 3 March, a briefing by Lord Paddy Ashdown, High Representative for the implementation of the Peace Agreement, on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

He stressed the progress made by Bosnia and Herzegovina concerning indirect tax and customs reform, the establishment of State-level command and control over the armed forces, the creation of a unified intelligence and security agency, and the implementation of the new unified statute for the city of Mostar.

Some reforms were still to be completed; however, the creation of a State-level high judicial and prosecutorial council, the creation of a State information and protection agency, the establishment of a domestic capacity to prosecute war criminals, the completion of the work of the Srebrenica commission and the implementation of the United Nations-led police certification process.

The High Representative also stressed the extent of the economic difficulties and announced the launching of phase 2 of the "bulldozer initiative", which should allow the Bosnian economy to reach growth and produce job creation.

In their interventions, the members of the Council welcomed the improvements in the country's situation. They expressed support for the action of the High Representative.

They called on the Government of Bosnia to continue its efforts, particularly in carrying out the Security Council's resolutions and its international obligations concerning the decertification of police officers, arresting war criminals and collaborating with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

The members of the Council expressed their concern regarding the economic and social difficulties of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the ethnic divisions that remained, and the political tensions within the current majority.

Some members of the Council underlined the importance of the future adhesion of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Euro-Atlantic institutions (NATO partnership for peace, stabilization and association agreement with the European Union).

Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro)

On 18 March, the Security Council held an emergency public meeting in the presence of the Secretary-General, the Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, Joschka Fischer, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia and Montenegro, Goran Svilanovic, to respond to the sudden deterioration of the situation in Kosovo on 17 March.

The members of the Council strongly condemned the outbreak of large-scale ethnically motivated violence in Kosovo and insisted on the necessity of restoring security and prosecuting the authors of ethnic violence.

They encouraged the international community to continue its efforts to bring back calm to the province.

They reiterated their support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for UNMIK and KFOR, and called for full implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) so as to make progress in the building of a democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo.

They exhorted all communities in Kosovo to moderation and stressed the necessity of resuming dialogue as quickly as possible.

A presidential statement (S/PRST/2004/5) was read out at the end of the meeting.

The members of the Council also issued a statement to the press on 26 March condemning the killing of two policemen (see appendix).

Thematic issues

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in Madrid on 11 March, the Council adopted resolution 1530 (2004) on the same day.

Counter-Terrorism Committee

On 4 March, the Security Council held an open debate on the Counter-Terrorism Committee. Ambassador Arias, Permanent Representative of Spain, Chairman of the Committee, opened the debate by informing the Council about three main issues: first, the work of the Committee during the months of October, November and December 2003; secondly, the mainlines of its tenth programme of work; and thirdly, the main aspects of the report of the Committee on its own revitalization, which was approved on 19 February.

- During the last three months of 2003, the Committee had completed the review of reports from Member States on their implementation of resolution 1373 (2001), approving 44 reports and reviewing 37. It continued to expand contacts and cooperation with relevant international, regional and subregional organizations. Its Chairman had made a trip to Europe, during which he visited four capitals and met with eight organizations.

- The Committee would continue to study the reports of Member States on their implementation of resolution 1373 (2001) and to provide technical assistance to States when needed. It would also review the conclusions of the meeting in Vienna on 12 March, hosted by OSCE.

- The report of the Committee of 19 February on its own revitalization was circulated as a document of the Security Council. The goal of the revitalization exercise was to provide the Committee with the means to become more operational, more proactive and more visible, in order to strengthen the fight against terrorism by giving it further means to fulfil its mandate of monitoring the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001).

The revitalized Committee would maintain its present structure of the plenary (members of the Security Council) and the Bureau, and a Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate would be created that would reorganize the present staff of experts and secretariat. A resolution would be needed for the full implementation of the revitalization.

After the members of the Council, 21 delegations took part in the debate, which was mainly focused on the question of the revitalization, generally considered as necessary to reinforce the efficiency of the Committee. Other topics mentioned by the participants were the need for the international community to continue fighting terrorism, in particular its financing and its root causes, such as poverty and armed conflict, and to respect human rights in doing so.

On 26 March, the Council adopted resolution 1535 (2004), on the revitalization of the Committee and, on 30 March, the President made a statement regarding the continuation of the current arrangements for the Bureau of the Committee for another six months (S/PRST/2004/8).

International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda

On 26 March, the Security Council adopted resolution 1534 (2004) on the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, in which it reiterated its calls for cooperation from regional States, reaffirmed the completion strategy outlined in resolution 1503 (2003), and established a periodic semi-annual dialogue between the Council and the Presidents and Prosecutors of the two Tribunals on progress made towards achievement of the completion strategies.

Appendix

Statements to the press made by the President of the Security Council in March 2004

Burundi (22 March)

This morning, the members of the Security Council heard a statement by Mr. Sadry, head of the assessment mission recently sent by the Secretary-General to Burundi, on recent developments in the situation in that country.

The Council members reaffirmed their full support for the peace process under the Agreement signed in Arusha on 28 August 2000, and for the transitional authorities.

They once again expressed concern at the continuing fighting and urged all the parties concerned to exercise restraint. They urged the Forces nationales de libération (Palipehutu-FNL), led by Mr. Rwasa, and the Government to complete the talks with a view to promoting, as soon as possible, a complete cessation of hostilities and the participation of Palipehutu-FNL in the transitional institutions.

They encouraged the transitional authorities to enact without delay the laws and regulations required for the holding of elections within the time limits provided for by the Arusha Agreement.

The Council members took note of the progress made in the preparation of the programme for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants and called on the parties to firmly commit themselves to it without delay. They encouraged international financial institutions and donor countries to support the programme.

The members of the Council paid tribute to the efforts made by the States of the Regional Initiative on Burundi and the Facilitation, in particular South Africa, as well as by the African Union, to bring peace to Burundi. They also hailed the efforts of the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB), and of the South African, Ethiopian and Mozambican contingents which make it up.

The members of the Council took note of the recommendations contained in the latest report of the Secretary-General on a peacekeeping operation in Burundi. Without prejudice to the action that the Council might wish to take on those recommendations, they invited the African Union to consider extending the mandate of AMIB, due to expire on 2 April 2004. They called on the international community to provide AMIB with such financial, material and logistical support as it might need in the meantime.

Côte d'Ivoire (26 March)

The members of the Security Council expressed grave concern at the events that occurred in Côte d'Ivoire, in particular in Abidjan, on 25 March.

They emphasized that the Council had endorsed the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. That political agreement is the only solution to the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire.

The members of the Council recalled the Council's commitment to support the process of peaceful settlement in Côte d'Ivoire, as evidenced by its decision to deploy a peacekeeping force with a clear and robust mandate.

The members of the Council emphasized that all the Ivorian parties must make the same commitment. No progress can be achieved in the implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement without the resolve and commitment of all the Ivorian parties themselves. It is up to them, first and foremost, to fully implement the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, without preconditions, as they committed themselves to doing in January 2003.

The members of the Council stressed that it is essential to proceed immediately and simultaneously with the implementation of all the commitments made under the agreement. They emphasized in particular that it is urgent to adopt the key texts provided for in the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, to begin operations to disarm combatants, to ensure the redeployment of the administration throughout the territory.

The members of the Council stressed that it is imperative for all the Ivorian parties to remain fully engaged in the Government. They urge all the Ivorian parties to act with responsibility and restraint in the interest of Côte d'Ivoire and the Ivorian people. The members of the Council emphasized that the Ivorian authorities are responsible for ensuring the security of all the citizens.

Democratic Republic of the Congo (2 and 31 March)

2 March

The members of the Security Council heard this morning a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, on recent developments in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The members of the Council reaffirmed their full support for the current efforts of the Government of National Unity and Transition, as well as for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the personnel of MONUC. They commended inter alia the role of MONUC in helping to resolve recent tensions in Bukavu and to respond to violence in Ituri, and called on all parties involved to work together in the interests of the transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The members of the Council took note with concern of the violence and killings carried out by certain armed groups in the region, who attacked local populations and MONUC. They condemn these atrocities with the utmost firmness, as well as propaganda against MONUC and, to make it clear to the armed groups that such actions will no longer be tolerated, they support the action already taken by MONUC, which has a robust mandate.

The members of the Council called upon the Congolese transitional authorities to exercise fully their responsibilities in the eastern part of the country, and in particular to do everything possible so that those responsible for these crimes do not remain unpunished. They underlined the importance of appointing the provincial governors, which must be done without delay, and in a transparent and consultative manner.

The members of the Council urged all countries in the region to accelerate the normalization of their relations. They call upon the States in the region to play a constructive role, in particular by ensuring, in liaison with the Government of National Unity and Transition and with MONUC, that armed groups operating in Ituri and in North and South Kivu be prevented from receiving support from their territory.

31 March

The members of the Security Council heard this morning a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Aware of the difficulties that need to be overcome to carry through the peace and national reconciliation process, they reaffirmed their full support for the efforts undertaken by the Government of National Unity and Transition. They also underlined their support for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the personnel of MONUC, particularly in the light of the killing of a United Nations peacekeeper in Bukavu on March 29.

The Council expressed its concern over the serious incidents in Kinshasa on 28 March, and called on all parties to ensure that the transition was not jeopardized. They hope that all will be made clear about this serious incident in a swift and transparent manner. They observed with appreciation the cohesion displayed by the President of the Republic and the four Vice-Presidents, and the swiftness of the Government of National Unity and Transition's response.

The members of the Council called upon the Congolese leaders to make every effort possible to proceed with the full implementation of the Global and All-Inclusive Agreement on the Transition. They appealed to them in particular to take the steps necessary for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants, the reform of the security sector, the full re-establishment of State authority and the successful organization of elections.

They recalled the importance the Security Council attaches to respect for the unity and sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They remain in this regard particularly attentive to continuing violence and human rights abuses, particularly in the eastern part of the country. They firmly condemned ongoing incidents and reminded the parties that there will be no impunity.

The members of the Council stressed the importance of pursuing all efforts aimed at expediting the convening of the international conference on the Great Lakes and the Central African region. They encouraged the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbours, particularly to the east, to continue to improve their bilateral relations and cooperation.

They further urged all parties and States in the region to respect the arms embargo and to refrain from any support to armed militias in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Iraq (2 March)

The members of the Security Council condemn in the strongest possible terms today's horrendous terrorist attacks in Baghdad and Kerbala, which have reportedly resulted in more than a hundred dead and injured hundreds more, with the sole and

deliberate purpose of exacerbating tensions between religious communities in Iraq on this holy day celebrating Ashura.

The members of the Council express their deepest sympathy and condolences to all the victims of the attacks and their families.

The members of the Council reiterate their full support to the efforts of the Iraqi people to rebuild their country and advance the political transition.

Haiti (5 March)

The members of the Security Council heard a presentation by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Jan Egeland, who described the humanitarian situation on the ground and the response expected of the international community, in particular the United Nations agencies.

The Under-Secretary-General highlighted the need for emergency aid in the key sectors of food, health care, water and sanitation, noting the critical importance of restoring security as a condition for access to vulnerable Haitians.

The members of the Council reiterated their call for all parties to provide safe and unimpeded humanitarian access as called for in resolution 1529 (2004).

The members of the Council stressed the importance of a Flash Appeal to be made on behalf of Haiti next week, in both Port-au-Prince and New York, and urged generous and timely international support.

The members of the Council welcomed the contributions of the troop contributors and took note of the information provided on the deployment of the Multinational Interim Force on the ground in Haiti.

The members of the Council also welcomed the fact that the Force would continue to coordinate, as needed, with the Special Adviser for Haiti and the OAS special mission to prevent further deterioration of the humanitarian situation.

The members of the Council will continue to follow closely developments in Haiti, including the evolution of the humanitarian situation.

Kosovo (26 March)

The members of the Security Council strongly condemned the killing on 23 March in Kosovo of two policemen, one UNMIK officer from Ghana and one Kosovo Police Service officer. They extended their condolences to the families of the victims and also to the Government of Ghana.

The members of the Council reaffirmed that any attack on the international presence or the law enforcement agencies in Kosovo is intolerable. The members of the Security Council called on the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government and all inhabitants of Kosovo to cooperate with UNMIK and KFOR in support of the police investigation, so that those responsible for the killing of the police officers and other violent crimes may be brought to justice.